

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 DOTE-00 FMC-01 CG-00

DLOS-09 OES-07 /047 W

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R 091227Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3981

INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 8264

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB IN

SUBJ: THREAT OF ALL-INDIA PORT STRIKE JUNE 16

1. THE EIGHT MAJOR PORTS OF INDIA ARE THREATENED WITH AN INDEFINITE STRIKE BEGINNING JUNE 16 OVER ISSUES OF REVISION OF WAGES AND BENEFITS. THE POWERFUL ALL-INDIA PORT AND DOCKWORKERS FEDERATION (AIPDWF) ISSUED THE STRIKE NOTICE AT THE PORTS OF BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, MADRAS, COCHIN, KANDLA, VISHAKHAPATNAM, PARADIP AND MORMUGAO. THE AIPDWF HAS ALSO CALLED FOR IMMEDIATE NEGOTIATIONS ON ITS DEMANDS, RIVAL PORT UNIONS HAVE MADE NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THEIR INTENTIONS BUT ARE LIKELY TO JOIN THE STRIKE IF IT OCCURS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF LABOR COMMISSIONER HAS BEGUN CONCILIATION EFFORTS BETWEEN THE AIPDWF AND THE PORT AUTHORITIES. THE OUTCOME OF SUCH EFFORTS IS PRESENTLY UPREDICTABLE, HOWEVER, AND THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO APPRISE US SHIPPING INTERESTS OF THE STRIKE THREAT.

2. THE APPROXIMATELY 200,000 PORTS AND DOCKWORKERS HAD
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STAGED A FOUR-DAY ALL-INDIA STRIKE IN JANUARY 1975 OVER THE SAME ISSUES AND WON INTERIM WAGE INCREASES AND THE ASSURANCE THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF A WAGE REVISION COMMITTEE WOULD BE EXPEDITED. THE WAGE REVISION COMMITTEE SUBMITTED ITS RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT IN LATE 1976, BUT THE UNIONS ARE SAID TO BE DISSATISFIED BECAUSE THEY HAD NO REPRESENTATION ON THE COMMITTEE AND

THEY CONSIDER THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDED WAGE INCREASES AS TOO LOW.

3. THE ISSUES IN THE THREATENED ALL-INDIA STRIKE ARE URELATED TO THE RECENT 11-DAY STRIKE OF THE SEVERAL THOUSAND EMPLOYEES OF THE BOMBAY PORT TRUST WHO WERE PROTESTING AGAINST UNILATERAL CHANGES IN THEIR WORKING CONDITIONS DURING THE EMERGENCY.

4. COMMENT: GIVEN THE DIRE CONSEQUENCES TO THE ECONOMY OF A PORT PARALYSIS, THE AIPDWFS THREATENED STRIKE HAS RECEIVED SURPRISINGLY LIMITED PRESS COVERAGE AND EVOKED NO COMMENT AS YET FROM SENIOR POLITICAL LEADERS. THIS MAY REFLECT A DESIRE ON BOTH SIDES TO INITIATE MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS IN A CALM ATMOSPHERE. SINCE ONE OF THE UNION'S MAJOR GRIEVANCES IS ITS EXCLUSION FROM THE WAGE COMMITTEE, ONCE NEGOTIATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT BEGIN ON THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS, THE AIPDWF MAY BELIEVE IT HAS GAINED THIS POINT AND MAY BE WILLING TO EXTEND THE STRIKE DEADLINE IF PROGRESS APPEARS POSSIBLE. GOHEEN

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 09-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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